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## THE ALCHEMIST;

OR,  
Beauty's Mirrors.

## CHAPTER FIRST.



TOOLS are not all dead yet, neither are the experimentalists, theorists, and visionaries, who amount sometimes to about the same thing. There was an old physician by the name of Ralph Goldstone, who had a beautiful child—a little daughter. This child had now no acknowledged mother; and the way of it was this. When Ralph was young he was splendidly handsome—the most princely young man to look upon there was in the city. He had always been a close student, and was called as talented as he was handsome. The fact that he paid but little attention to female

charms did not detract from his influence among women; on the contrary, each was anxious to prove her own attractions the most powerful by success in fascinating his regards.

Whenever he went into society, which was not often, he was the object of flattering attention; but time passed away, and he was thirty years of age, and had never bowed his heart at any shrine of loveliness. This was not because he was cold so much as because he was pre-occupied. Medicine was only one branch of his studies—chemistry was more particularly his delight, and the sciences all came in for a share of his devotion.

One evening, "circumstance, that unspiritual god," or fate, or fortune, threw him into a path which led him away from the course he had hitherto pursued. A young girl came to his office, and begged him to visit her dying mother. The night was rainy, the hour was late. He knew she was young by her voice, which, even in its agony, was sweet and persuasive; he could not see her face, which was shrouded in an old hood, dripping with the rain, whose drops were mingled

with the tears upon her cheeks. If she had been a withered beldam, he would have gone with her all the same; for his soul was "open as day to melting charity." He thought more of her entreaties to hasten than he did of her harmonious accents; and, almost ashamed to draw on his comfortable overcoat and spread his umbrella, with that slight and ill-protected form shivering before him, he followed her as she ran through street after street, until they came to a room in one of those abodes where respectable poverty tries to escape the vulgarity of some meaner locality.

With an eager hand his guide flung open the door; but when she had hastened to the bedside, she gave one sharp cry and fell forward upon the breast of the dead mother, now altogether passed beyond any earthly aid.

She did not faint, but she lay there helpless, in an anguish that was much more painful to behold than insensibility would have been. Dr. Goldstone looked around the apartment. There was nothing in it but the plainest necessary furniture, except an old-fashioned piano, well-heaped with music, which stood between the windows. A lamp burned dimly; he trimmed it, for his eyes were dim with tears, and took out his medicine-case to find something which should act soothingly upon the really fearfully excited nerves of the form that was trembling with its spirit's anguish.

"Be calm, my child, or you will kill yourself," he said, in his gentlest voice, as he raised her head from its cold resting-place.

"Then I will not be calm; for I wish to die!" she exclaimed, in the bitterness of a desolation, which she felt, at that moment, was too great to bear.

The Doctor was not a man given to religious consolation—he was no professor—indeed, he had, perhaps, like Adam before him, allowed the craving after knowledge to drive out that simplicity of faith and obedience which is the parent of all true acquirements; but as the young girl flung back her storm-wet hair and looked at him with those despairing eyes, he was prompted to say:

"Trust in God; He can give you rest—give you peace."

"I am alone! all alone! and I loved her!" was her reply; but now she burst into tears, which was better than the mute grievings which had hitherto shaken her.

The face which she had raised to him,

notwithstanding its pallor, was one of exquisite beauty, and something in its innocence and extreme youthfulness, as well as its despair, made it impossible for him to desert her until he had seen that something was done in alleviation of her forlorn condition.

"Have you no relatives?"

She shook her head.

"No neighbors?"

"I have no claim upon them."

"Yes you have! the claim of suffering humanity. I shall arouse them, and if their sympathies cannot be freely offered they can, at least, be *bought*. There is magic power in gold."

He went into the hall and knocked at the first door he came to. After a little delay, a woman, who had thrown a shawl over her night-gown, partly opened the door. He told her that the lady in the adjoining room was dead, and asked her if she would not sit up with the corpse and perform the necessary duties.

"Is she dead? poor thing! Her daughter told me she was worse, and I'd have offered to have set up with her, but I'm a widow, and support four children by sewing, and have their clothes to fix up besides, and a night's rest is necessary to me. If I didn't catch a few hours sleep I couldn't work. But I'm very sorry I didn't offer. Yes, sir, I'll go, and do what I can."

"You shall not do it for nothing, either. You shall be so well paid for your time that you may afford to rest from your sewing a day or two. Only be kind to the poor child."

"That I will try to be," replied the woman, in so hearty a tone of sympathy, that he could do no otherwise than be glad of the service thus secured.

Going back to the orphan, he compelled her, by a gentle firmness, to drink the draught he had prepared, told her he would return in the morning, pressed his purse into her hand, and went forth again into the driving, autumn storm, to run over lamp-posts in seeking his rooms, and to dream of one voice and one face in every vision of the night.

From that hour he constituted himself Eleanor Bond's guardian. Finding that she was indeed without friends and relatives, he resolved that such sensitive and innocent loveliness should never be abandoned to the cruel kindness of the world. What should he do with her? He was a bachelor, and had no home to offer her.

She was but fifteen or sixteen; so he could not ask any of his friends to marry her, even if he had regarded any of them as being worthy of her. She was dying of grief and loneliness. Finally he bethought him of a boarding-school; and that she could remain in one for two or three years, and in that time some of his motherly female friends would be found to give her their counsel and countenance.

In a couple of weeks she was in one of the most fashionable schools of a neighboring State—listless and forlorn enough at first,—but gradually conquering, as youth and health will, her deep dejection. Here she remained for two years, furnished with everything necessary to the most liberal dress and accomplishments, occasionally writing her guardian a letter, but never meeting him.

As Ralph got thinking about her one day, he resolved he would make her a visit; and as it was an unusual thing for him to resolve anything outside of his studies and practice, he carried it into execution the more impulsively. The next afternoon, he was at the school, sending his card up to the principal, and waiting in the reception-room for her appearance. While he waited, an angelic voice began singing in an adjoining parlor to an accompaniment upon the piano which proved the touch of a master. It was a part of "Norma"—and the performer sang on, apparently without an effort; the passion and sweetness of the music rising like dew that is exhaled in heaven, and bearing the soul of the listener along with it. Unconsciously he arose and passed the threshold, standing mutely listening until the music was played, and a girl in the first flush of womanly beauty, turned from the instrument and perceived him. He had never heard such a voice before, and he had never seen such a face, nor felt the graces of such a manner. Fair as the very lilies that sleep in the moonlight, with delicate features, and eyes and lips of a rich and brilliant beauty, a form whose every contour was perfect, and every motion naturally elegant, hair black and profuse, she stood before him like an emanation of the music, whose living soul she seemed to be.

"Is this Eleanor Bond?" he asked, after a moment's pause.

He knew that it was her, before she answered him. When he had met her before, she was pale, and her eyes dim with weeping, her manner constrained by grief

and uncertainty—yet, even then, he had thought her extremely lovely. Now, she was happy, elegantly dressed, self-assured, rounded into the full bloom of girlhood. She recognized him, too.

"My dear—Mr. Gold one," she exclaimed, springing forward, and placing her hand in his.

She had been about to say, "My dear guardian," or "friend," or "benefactor," and she looked now as if she wished to clasp her arms about his neck; but she did not know how he would receive such impressions. He might wish to be only Mr. Goldstone to her, though gratitude, and the want of any other friend or relative, made him seem all to her. Smiles and blushes lighted up her countenance—admiration and pleasure beamed in her eyes. It gave Ralph Goldstone entirely new sensations to find this young creature so loving, so grateful—looking up to him for sympathy, advice, affection. The physician, the student, the man of science, was no more. Crucibles, telescopes, magnetic batteries, were to him as if they never had been. His heart was in a glow such as no grosser fire could kindle; he had discovered two new worlds in her eyes, and magnetic attractions in every glance and touch. One more philosopher had forsaken theories for the intuitions now for the first time awakened in his breast.

That evening, in a private interview permitted by the Principal, he told Eleanor that if she were tired of her books, and wished to go out into the world, he stood ready to offer her the only protection which society allowed in its prudence—he would make her his wife. His voice trembled as he spoke the words; he felt how tender and precious its meaning was. Eleanor looked down at her little foot, which was patting the carpet, confusedly. Blushes and tears were on her cheeks, for she was excited, and a little frightened. But her heart was not moved like that of the strong man's before her. She knew that her beauty had thus early made a noble conquest, and she was flattered; she saw that her guardian was handsome as romance itself could desire, and she was pleased; she knew that he was wealthy, and her ambition was aroused; she felt that he was good and honorable, and she imagined that she loved him—or should love him soon. So she promised to become his wife.

They were married in a few days, at

the school, and Madame — congratulated herself that her beautiful pupil had made so magnificent a match, and was so properly provided for. Dr. Goldstone took his bride to New-York, and introduced her to his large circle of fashionable and influential acquaintances. They had heard, with vexation and chagrin, that he had thrown himself away upon a penniless orphan whom he had educated; everybody had expressed his or her opinion upon the folly of the proceeding, and the want of worldly wisdom of such learned men as the Doctor; but when they saw the young wife, her beauty became his excuse. Envy itself could find no fault with her, except that she had neither fortune nor family; and as her husband had both, it was concluded to let that pass.

All that winter the Doctor and his bride were favored guests everywhere, and went continually to all kinds of fashionable gaieties. He went simply because it seemed to give her pleasure; and because costly and elegant dress enhanced her beauty, he delighted to see her wear it. She had many admirers, but none who admired her so much as her own husband; what made her happy was accepted by him. He did not see that she was too fond of flattery, fine dress, and the devotion of men in society. She was to him as an innocent child, whose every caprice is attractive.

But Ralph was a man of too deep a mind and too engrossing a love of study, to remain forever in the whirl of the giddy circle which his wife found so fascinating. After a time, he returned to his books and his laboratory, content to know that she went about as much and was as gay as ever. He never thought of objecting to the attentions of others, which allowed her to go out and be amused, while he went on with his theories and experiments. It was enough for him to have her by his side in the sweet hours of home retirement, when all care was thrown by, and he tasted the exquisite delight of having his own fireside, and this "fair spirit for his minister." He would as soon have thought of plucking a flower and exposing it to wither in the gloom and amid the fumes of his laboratory, as of asking her to share his hours of labor; he would have thought it basely selfish to require her to remain alone in her boudoir, while he was pursuing avocations in which she could have no possible interest. He loved to see her careless gaiety; and oh! how

sweet were his hours of leisure, when he could draw his beloved Eleanor to his side, and bask in her sunshiny beauty, and feel that her charms were for his happiness! Her smiles, her voice, her tender caresses, were more to him every day; and when, after a year or two, her little daughter was placed in his arms, he wept from exceeding emotion, and blessed his wife from the depths of an ardent heart.

Mother and child! precious gifts which God had vouchsafed him! so he regarded them with ever-increasing tenderness; yet, his love of experiment grew on him likewise—and sometimes he would spend days and nights in the apartments dedicated to his researches, only coming out to give his wife a kiss, and toss the little one for a few moments in his arms. Eleanor complained of this a good deal, with that half-petulant, half-entreating air, so bewitching in a beautiful woman. She implored him to go out more with her, asserting that she was always compelled to accept the politeness of others or remain at home like a nun. Then he would ask her if she ever was in want of some one to attend to her wishes—tell her to go and be happy, he would not complain, only so that she was glad to get back to him—say that she knew he never was a ladies' man—he could not abandon his search among the stars for will-o'-the-wisps—and end by kisses, and presents of more money and more jewels;—and he would return to his pursuits, and she would go where she ever was welcomed as the brightest attraction—the "cynosure of neighboring eyes!"

Dr. Goldstone did not see that his little child was left almost exclusively to the tender mercies of hired servants. He was one of those men whose eyes are fixed upon distant summits, but who stumble right over the little affairs of every-day life.

Long after his friends began to talk and nod and whisper, and almost to forewarn, he saw nothing wrong in his household. It was Paradise to him, and he was blind to all blemishes. So the shock came upon him unawares. He had been for several weeks entirely devoted to a series of chemical experiments which he was making, and out of which he hoped to bring a result that would make the world the wiser. For a time, he had scarcely eaten, drank or slept, and now, one midnight, he brought his labors to a successful close.

"My darling Eleanor must be the first to hear of my triumph," he whispered, and leaving his laboratory, he stole through the quiet apartments until he reached the door of her chamber. This luxuriantly furnished, and, to him, almost sacred room, he never entered without something of the deferential joy of a bridegroom. He knocked softly at the door—no answer was returned. "My darling sleeps," he murmured, entering upon tip-toe, that he might gaze upon her slumbering beauty.

The lamp which swung from the centre of the tented ceiling, and which gave out fragrance like a censer as it burned, glowed dimly, throwing a dusky splendor upon the prominent features of the room, and deepening by contrast, each luxurious work. He advanced eagerly to the bed and drew aside the lace draperies which curtained it. She was not there.

"She must have gone to the opera,—I remember she told me that there was a new prima-donna to appear to-night," he said—but he sighed, for he felt that he had neglected her for a long time, and now he felt like confiding his hard-won success to her. But there was still something in the room to protect him from absolute loneliness. A soft, uneasy breath, which echoed his, caused him to look round, and discover his little girl in the crib which stood at the foot of the couch. She was asleep, and had just, with one of the restless movements of childhood, thrown out her arms and feet from the silken cover. The crib had been one of her fond father's many costly gifts;—little Loves and Cupids, exquisitely carved, hovered at the corners, holding up the curtains, and the whole device was like a piece of fairy's workmanship. The loveliest thing about it, though, was the little sleeper. This was but the second summer of her growth; she was at that enchanting age when infantile wiles and bewitchments are the most profuse. As her father stole to her side and looked at her, he wondered how he had remained from her so much; his heart accused him of neglect of the treasures that were his. "So like her mother—her beautiful mother!" he murmured, leaning over the dimpled hands and roseate cheeks without daring to kiss them, for fear of disturbing that innocent slumber. As he observed the little naked limbs, he drew the covering over them, wondering where the child's attendant was, and why she was thus left alone and neglected in her mother's absence.



Thinking to keep watch for the momentarily-expected absent one, he looked on the table beneath the lamp for a book. He did not find one, but instead, a note, the reading of which sufficed him.

Can you imagine a person whose soul and senses are bathed in warmth and light, who listens to music, breathes perfumes, and dreams of love, torn in an instant from the presence of the beloved, from the sweet sounds, the melody, and the glow of the sunlight, and thrust out into a stormy winter midnight, the doors barred against him, the darkness bewildering him, the storm drenching, the cold penetrating him? Or a person walking along over summer grass and flowers, with his eyes fixed upon the blue of a sun-lit sky, who steps unconsciously over the brink of a precipice and falls a measureless depth, and lies, dashed in pieces, hopeless of aid, yet who does not and cannot die? These desperate cases, and many others, more to be dreaded, you might imagine, and still have no conception of the change which passed over the life of Ralph Goldstone, as he read the note—a dainty sheet, soft as a rose-leaf, and traced by a daintier hand:—

“RALPH:

When you read this, I shall be far away, never to return to you. I do not ask your forgiveness, for I do not deserve it, and cannot possibly have it. To thank you for the past would be to remind myself of my own ingratitude. I say nothing, except that I am doing wrong. You do not love me as I require to be loved. You are cold—absorbed in your speculations and theories. I am of an Italian parentage, and your indifference chills me. I have been over-persuaded by one who loves me more as my nature demands. You need not look for us, for we shall be on our way to Europe by the hour at which you discover this. I will prove to you that I am not entirely cruel, by leaving you our child. My heart yearns to take her with me—but you love her as much as you can anything—and you will make a better parent than I. Do not hate her for her mother's sins—*she* is innocent.

ELEANOR.”

Great God! what a stone was that to roll over one of the most unselfish and earnest of human hearts! He sat, with the note dropped at his feet, until the child awoke in the morning. Once during these hours, the record of which it is not for the lips to speak, there was a silken rustle, a

light footstep, a stealing shadow—but he had neither eyes nor ears.

And thus it came that the little Rosalind was motherless.

## CHAPTER SECOND.

THE discovery which had been the result of Ralph Goldstone's experiments upon the evening so disastrous to his happiness, had been the manufacture of diamonds; not in minute crystals, such as a French chemist has since produced, but of a size and beauty to suit himself. It was with this glorious piece of information that he had sought the bedside of her who was to repose in his arms no longer; and his most joyful, most eager thought had been—“Now, my darling shall have a tiara such as only queens are accustomed to wear.” And let it stand as one proof of how little wealth weighs in the balance of happiness against the emotions of the heart, when we state that for days after that sorrowing night, the memory of his discovery, and his consequent unlimited fortune, never recurred to the Doctor.

It may be that if the fair and faithless Eleanor had tarried that one night more, she would never have deserted her husband; for beauty loves the added power which immense wealth can confer upon it. It must be evident to all, that it was not the coldness of her companion, nor his pre-occupied habits, which influenced her to give her affections elsewhere, so much as it was bewildered vanity, so giddy with the flatteries paid to such unequaled loveliness, that it could no longer behold in their right aspect the duties and pleasures of life.

“Her beauty has been her ruin,” murmured Ralph, and he cursed that beauty in his heart—the grace of that lovely head, the swell of that white breast, the infantine dimples in those arms, that had been such a chain about his neck to bind him to her will—he cursed all, for her sake, even more than his own.

His friends never spoke to Dr. Goldstone of the “misfortune” which had befallen his house; there was a look in his face which forbade it. They did not dare to express even covert sympathy; nor to inquire the why and wherefore of the steps which he subsequently took.

His beautiful mansion and all its furniture were offered for sale without reserve;

and met with generous bidders, too, when they were auctioned away, for the world loves scandal a little better than it does dinner (which is saying a great deal) and it was fashionable thereafter among fashionable people to have some articles of *vertu* which had once belonged to—(speak it in a whisper) the unmentionable Mrs. E—— G——. It has been asserted with considerable show of truth, that that paragon of virtue, Mrs. Potiphar, of our first families, was so successful as to obtain at a very high price the discarded toothbrush of Mrs. E—— G——, which she has placed in a glass box which adorns her cabinet of *curios*. She probably intended it “to point a moral and adorn a tale,” which should warn her daughters when they grew up, for no one can be so uncharitable as to suppose that any love of a rich little tid-bit of gossip bestowed the relish which worked down the price of the dainty article.

After disposing of his city property, Dr. Goldstone took his little Rosalind and went off on a journey; not to Europe, the mention of which was hateful to him, but to Cuba and South America. In the latter country he botanized, and made some valuable discoveries of medicinal plants. An old nurse who had been a servant in his mother's household, went with him to take charge of the child. After an absence of a year and a half, he returned to the banks of a lovely and secluded little lake in the central part of the State of New-York, where he purchased the country-seat of a gentleman who was going away.

Spacious and beautiful as this already was, he was continually making additions to it. He had a few neighbors, the occupants of the surrounding villas, who regarded him as a very singular and a very interesting man; but, however great their curiosity might be to enter certain portions of the mansion which they had heard were furnished with strange taste and splendor, they seldom got beyond the great receiving room, or the library back of it. Occasionally a favored guest was surprised and delighted by an invitation from the host to see for himself the truth of some question, botanical or mineral, or social or what not, that they might be discussing, and would be led into a garden, which in the winter time held under its glass roof all the glories of the tropics—or into a suite of rooms furnished in imitation of the style of the Persians, Turks, Chinese or some ancient Roman age of luxury; or be

called to walk in a miniature forest sweet with the music of every known singing bird. Only one strange omission there was to the general magnificence—there were no mirrors.

Ralph Goldstone had come to the conclusion derived from his better experience, that beauty was a curse to a woman. He *thought* it pained him to see that the pretty Rosalind was the image of her mother, and could not fail to be as beautiful. That he was self-deceived is evident from the fact that his eyes were not more fascinated than his heart by her every charming feature and bewitching motion. She had all the grace, the nameless charm of manner, of her mother, and her exquisite symmetry; while added to this, was an expression of the soul and intellect inherited from her father, which promised to give greater power to her beauty.

The idea of Ralph was this—to conceal from his daughter that she was beautiful—to teach her to believe that she was even ugly.

This was the secret of the absence of mirrors. There were mirrors in the dressing rooms—Rosalind had one in her apartment—but what few there were had been made by Ralph himself, and reflected back but a distorted semblance of what was before them. If the little girl had ever thought any thing about her appearance, or had much opportunity to compare herself with other children, she would have thought herself a very dumpy, broad-faced child, with a queer quirk of the eyes and mouth. But she was a happy creature, full of life and vivacity, innocent as the flowers and birds which surrounded her, and acting almost as much from instinct and as little from reflection as they. She seldom saw any children, and then usually when under restraint from the presence of their parents. She loved her father best, nurse Betsey next, and the rest of her impulsive heart was given to her many pets.

We said in the beginning that *old* Dr. Goldstone had a little daughter; yet at the period of which we are now writing, he was but little over forty years of age. A night of sorrow had blanched his hair, and the form which was once as firm as it was stately, stooped slightly; the face was yet handsome. It was more the dress and manner of the Doctor than anything in his appearance, saving his gray hair, which made people call him old.

His precious discovery he kept a profound secret.

He had negotiated privately with the Emperor of Russia and several other of the crowned heads of Europe, and derived enormous revenues from the sale of his diamonds. His plan was to employ an agent, who took them first to the Orient and affected to purchase them of the Bagdad merchants, then transported them to Europe, and filled orders.

He had added to his first success by learning to impart a lovely hue to such jewels as he wished. He had also learned to think that too much beauty, like too much gold, was dangerous; and to resolve that Rosalind should have no knowledge of her prospects for either. People knew that he was wealthy, and had inherited wealth; but they had no inkling of the power he possessed, nor of the princely income which was really his.

So here was a little girl being trained up by a man, and what was worse, by a philosopher. He was going to bring her up in ignorance of her beauty, instead of teaching her that self-control and dignity which would have overcome its temptations—without heeding that some time the knowledge *must* come to her, and find her unprepared—that the voice of flattery, when heard for the first time, would be doubly sweet. He was going to keep her as much out of society as possible, so that when she did finally go into it—at a time, too, when she might be deprived of his fatherly protection—she would be as ignorant of its falsities as she was innocent. So wise in human nature was Dr. Goldstone, the experienced physician, the distinguished botanist, the chemist who invented diamonds!

Rosa, as she was called sometimes, used to make faces at herself in the mirrors, and laugh at their comicality, when she was quite little; but as she grew older, she would sometimes look into her own bright, but distorted eyes, with a musing expression of sadness.

"I am not as pretty as my birds, or my flowers," she said to herself, one time; "nor half as pretty as that little girl that was here yesterday. I wonder my papa can love me as much as he does."

Her father stole behind her and took her in his arms.

"Little girls need not be pretty—they need only to be good. I love my Rosa for her kind little heart. And the hypocrite (is that too harsh a word for the occasion?) smoothed those restless flattering tresses down against the glowing cheeks, looking

fondly into the brilliant eyes uplifted to his.

Rosalind had teachers of music and dancing, and all feminine accomplishments; but they were all forbidden, upon pain of losing the rich Doctor's patronage, to say a word to the child commendatory to anything but her efforts to acquire what was to be taught her. These teachers all came to the house—Eleanor had been educated at a boarding school.

It was ludicrous to mark the French dancing-master's effort to restrain his admiration of the little sylph, whose feet seemed winged with music, whose gestures were expressive of harmony. "Ah! *mon ange!* how beautiful you do zat! you will set on fire ze hearts of all ze young—Ah! I beg ze parding, Mademoiselle!—zet step was very good tolerable."

"*Charmant!* Mademoiselle! ze dance make you so bright; your lips, your cheeks, your eyes! you have ze grace of an—an older pupil—if you persevere."

Thus the poor Frenchman was obliged to restrain the enthusiasm of his nature when he would fain have complimented the grace and beauty of his most admired scholar, whose

"Laugh was like a fairy's laugh,  
So musical and sweet;  
Whose foot was like a fairy's foot,  
So dainty and so fleet."

### CHAPTER THIRD

"H, dear, I believe I am lost!" half cried Rosalind, as she sat down on a mossy stone beside the path, and looked around, debating upon what course to pursue.

Her cheeks were flushed with the heat, her hat swung on her arm, she had burst out the side of her kid slipper with long walking and climbing.

She had started out without any particular object, except to wander along in the sunshine by the banks of the lake, and had enjoyed herself so much that she had gone farther than ever before; and had got into the forest, too, tempted by the wild strawberries and violets which she found. She could no longer see the lake, or her father's house; and, although the path she was in was well trodden, she was bewildered, and did not know whether to proceed this way or that, to get out of the wood on the homeward side.

"Well, I must say, you are a pretty big girl to get lost!" spoke up a voice with something of good-natured scorn, but more laughter in it. "Ho! I hav'n't been lost these three years, and you're older than I."

Rosalind looked quickly round and perceived a little boy who had been lying on a log not far away, and who now came forward and stood before her.

"Why, how old are you?" she asked with childish *naivete*.

"Nine and a half!" was the prompt response.

"And I am twelve, Master —."

"Ralph, is my name."

"Master Ralph. My name is Rosa Goldstone, and my father lives down by the lake; but I cannot find the way now. How funny! my father's name is Ralph, too."

"Is it? I can show you the house mighty quick. I know it. Its the great one with the queer chimneys and the pretty gardens, and what mother calls the tower. Did you ever see my mother?"

"I guess not; what's her name, and where do you live?"

"We live off there. Her name is Smith. Our house is not like yours—it is small, and it is not painted. Your father must be rich."

"Perhaps he is; he never said."

"Perhaps mother and I would be rich, if we had a father, like you. My mother sews collars and such things for the ladies in the village. But she is a lady, too: dont you think so?"

"You forget I have not seen her. I wonder if nurse would not have some collars for her to embroider! I'll ask her when I go home. If you know the way, will you please show it to me?"

"Yes, of course. Come along."

"Oh, dear! I'm so thirsty, and hungry, too," said Rosalind, as she slipped off the rock, and followed him, looking ruefully at her torn shoe, and walking as if wearied out.

"Then come in our house a minute, and I'll get you some water from the spring," said the boy, with hospitality.

He was a handsome, manly little fellow; Rosalind looked at him with gratitude, and did not refuse to accompany him, as he turned off from the main path and went along a winding declivity which led to a little brown cottage, hidden in trees, at the foot. There was a glimpse of the lake and of the chimneys of her father's

house, from the front door; the little girl thought it a very pretty place, with its morning-glory vine, and its clean floor without any carpet.

"Here, mother, is Dr. Goldstone's daughter. She is lost, and so thirsty and hungry! You get her a piece of bread and butter, please, while I go for the water;" and the boy called Rosalind in with an important air.

A woman was sitting at the window, busy with some embroidery. As her son spoke, and she looked around, she sprang suddenly into the middle of the floor and stood gazing at the visitor with an expression which alarmed the children.

"What frightens you, dear mamma?" asked Ralph.

"Oh, I am not frightened," she replied, drawing a long breath. "You surprised me a little, coming in so unexpectedly. This is Miss Rosalind Goldstone, is it? Sit here and rest yourself, my dear, while Ralph gets you a drink."

She led the child to a chair, took her hat from her, smoothed back her truant curls with gentle hands, and kissed her. Rosa thought she had the sweetest voice she had ever heard; and she did not shrink from the touch of hands that seemed inventing some excuse for being near her. Ralph came tugging in a pitcher of cold water before the mother thought to cut some slices of bread and butter and cake.

Rosalind sat with the lunch in her lap, eating and talking as if she had known them a year; Ralph chattered like a squirrel. It was not often *he* had a guest, and he was bound to make the most of the occasion. Mrs. Smith listened to them. She tried to continue her embroidery, but her fingers trembled yet with the little start she had received. She must have been a nervous woman; and, indeed, she looked very delicate—too delicate to be earning her living with her needle.

"Mercy! I must go. Papa and all the servants will be after me before long!" exclaimed Rosa, quite a while after she had finished her lunch.

"Then you had better go at once, my dear," said her hostess, looking uneasily out of the window. "But I hope you will come and see us again, whenever you are walking this way."

"I will, and bring my father," replied Rosalind, who had taken an excessive liking, not only to the little boy, but to the woman, whose sweet voice and affectionate manner had charmed her.

"Oh, no! I never receive visits from gentlemen—never! So you must excuse me. I have heard much of your father and have a high respect for him, Miss Rosalind, but please do not bring him here. Come yourself, whenever you can—*do* come!" she repeated, with a lingering emphasis which finished the spell she had put upon Rosa.

When the latter reached home, she found that search had already been instituted for her, and that her father was out in the rose garden calling her. She gave him an account of her adventures, her being lost, the pretty little boy, the beautiful lady who lived in a little house and sewed for a living.

"When I get old enough to wear collars I shall get her to embroider all mine," she said. "I shall pay her, oh, so much money for doing them! for she does not look well enough to work. But, oh, papa, collars will never look well on my dumpy shoulders!"

It was the first time that Ralph had heard her remark upon her personal appearance; and she said this so sadly, as if the thought had come upon her with great weight, that he could not but smile at the sudden change in her animated countenance.

"What matter is it whether my little daughter's shoulders are broad or slender, or whether collars become her or not, if her heart is good, and every body loves her for that?"

"It *does* matter," said Rosalind, with a very heavy sigh. "I have thought of it before, papa, and cried about it, too. There was a gentleman ridiculed me the other day, by telling me how pretty I was. It was *very* unkind of him—I despise him!"

Ah! Dr. Goldstone, man and philosopher, Mother Eve was speaking through the child then, and you could hear her plainly enough. He had never seen so discontented and almost rebellious an expression before upon the usually bright and placid brow of his daughter.

"Forgive me, papa," said a tender voice, the next moment, and the impulsive arms were about his neck. "It was in my heart, and it would come out. I will try and be content just as I am. But, ah! if I was as beautiful as Ralph's mother I should be perfectly—"

"Whose mother?"

"Ralph's. Oh, I forgot to tell you that the little boy's name was the same as yours. Is'nt it curious? Well, papa, I be-

lieve I am happy enough, anyhow!" A sudden glow came over her face. "You love me as much as you can, don't you?"

"Just as much," he replied, pressing her close to his side; and he could hardly forbear adding, as he looked into her radiant eyes, "and you are as beautiful a child as God ever made."

Dr. Goldstone never permitted Rosalind to make any visits, except to call in company with himself upon his few associates, and some of the children whose society he thought not objectionable. But Rosalind had so many sources of amusement at home, that she seldom thought of going abroad. Her father only lived to study her happiness; while he thought that he was training her in the very way of wisdom, he was in reality the slave of her caprices—unconsciously—for neither of them dreamed that such was the case. She was so generous, so affectionate, so yielding by nature, that it would have been difficult to spoil her. But he did his best.

Above all things, he guarded her against mirrors—as if she was to go through life without meeting any, and as if a distortion was better than nature's and heaven's beautiful truth.

Ever since her adventure in the forest, Rosalind had two friends whom she went to see more frequently and had a far greater degree of intimacy with, than any one else knew of. She did not conceal her visits from her father for fear of his displeasure, but simply because Mrs. Smith begged her not to make her a subject of conversation or ever bring any of her family to see her. She was still too much of a child to question the wherefore of this; all she cared for was, that she thought Ralph one of the nicest of boys, and loved to teach him many things in which she was better educated than he, and his mother the most beautiful and the best woman that ever lived. She had never known the gentle fascinations of a mother, and so was doubly susceptible to the feminine influences of this lonely friend.

Mrs. Smith and Rosalind used to sing together. Rosa found the former an excellent teacher, capable of correcting all her defects in style, and as both had fine voices, they took great delight in their music. Some of the young girl's happiest hours were spent in the little brown cottage. She brought many presents to Ralph; but these were not what won his boyish heart. Her smile, her arch laugh, her patience in teaching him, her love of

frolic, made her a "great girl" in his eyes.

Thus this season passed away, and others came and went. Influences were at work of conflicting natures. The philosopher was schooling the embryo woman. Realizing at last, that his precious daughter must sometime come in contact with the world, or be left a solitary recluse at his death, Dr. Goldstone began to introduce her a little more to its ways. He would have liked to travel with her, but for the mirrors in the fashionable hotels!

He trusted that through the strength of the principles he had instilled into her mind she would be able to resist all untoward influences when they should finally fall upon her. He had preserved her from being a vain woman—a silly woman—or a fashionable woman. She never gossiped about others of her sex, talked about dress, nor envied her friends—did not care what the latest Paris style was, and had no ambition to be a belle. She was artless, unassuming, gay, natural, truthful and intelligent. So much for his experiment. But the test of its strength was to come.

One day when she was in her sixteenth summer, Rosalind went out upon the lake in her little boat. Rowing leisurely over its blue waters, gathering the lilies which swarm like white-robed fairies upon its surface, she dreamed away the hours in one of those delicious reveries peculiar to youthful and imaginative minds, until the oar dropped from her listless hand, and the boat ceased its motion entirely. Not a cloud was in the sky, not a breeze stirred ever so small a ripple upon the lake. She leaned over to gaze down its clear depths, and an Undine answered back her look. Lo! there she saw no fairy's face but her own—yet not her own as she had been accustomed to seeing it. Nature was telling her the truth. She would have been excusable for playing Narcissus and falling in love with herself; for the face which looked up to her was the embodiment of all that is agreeable in youth, beauty and innocence. The broadness of the cheeks, the twist of the eyes—where were they? Rosalind gazed and gazed and smiled—she pondered, too, and finally came to a conclusion.

She was not so ignorant of the laws of science as not to know that those pellucid depths would be more apt to tell her the truth than the mirror which hung in her chamber.

"So I am beautiful, after all!"

As she whispered this delightedly, leaning over still nearer to the fair reflection which smiled back upon her, a sudden flaw of wind stole gurgling across the lake and struck under the slight skiff, which was already too far from its perpendicular, and upset it—so quickly that Rosalind had not even time to catch at its side before she went down to the embrace of the faithless image which had wiled her into such danger.

Oh! if she could have taken warning from this disastrous occurrence, never again to be beguiled by her own charms!

But perhaps it was too late to take a lesson from anything again in this life—for she went down—and arose—caught vainly at the impalpable air—and sank again.

In the meantime, while she had been so engaged with her discovery, a boat in the distance had been rapidly approaching nearer. The cry which she gave when she found herself in the water, caused it to redouble its speed; and by the earnest exertions of the occupant, it reached the spot of danger just in time for him to seize those streaming curls before the waves closed over their brightness for the last time.

She was insensible when Frederick Percival lifted her into his boat. He did not need to be told who the lovely girl was who lay like a statue in his arms. He had long worshiped at a distance the star whose culmination was watched so jealously by that old astrologer, her father. This was an opportunity which the fates had evidently thrown in his way—that is, if it were not too late to profit by it; which might be, for she neither breathed nor stirred. He was an athletic youth, and he rowed with all his strength. The moment he reached the shore, he snatched up his burden, whose weight he hardly felt, so excited was he, and ran up the elm-bordered walk to the portico, where the Doctor sat at his leisure, reading a learned treatise upon electricity.

This was a time for Dr. Goldstone to be thankful for his great medical skill. A less experienced person might never have brought the breath back to those youthful lips. He did it, calmly, successfully. Then, when restoration was sure, he began to tremble, and the voice was broken in which he expressed his thanks to her pre-server.

Of course Frederick Percival called



the next day, to inquire after the health of Miss Goldstone, and of course she was not refused permission to thank him personally for the services rendered.

And so, before her father had dreamed of her being anything but a little girl, Rosalind had a lover.

#### CHAPTER FOURTH.

**W**HAT are you reading, my love?"

"The Lady's Book, papa."

"The what?"

"The Lady's Book. But I am not reading—I am looking at the fashion-plate. Come here, please, and look at this beautiful evening dress! Is it not exquisite? I must have one just like it, papa—with real lace flounces, too. And, papa, I *do* wish you would order a different glass for my room. Last night Frederick told me my collar was on crooked, and it's all through that hateful glass. Now, Dr. Goldstone, I shall kiss you until you say 'yes.'"

And the philosopher sent an order to the city for twenty yards of Honiton lace, and a mirror seven feet by four!

"I shall have to get up another batch of diamonds if this little extravagant puss goes on at this rate," said the Doctor to himself, as he went into his laboratory, and kindled its slumbering fires. "There's the wedding coming off, next year, too; and there'll be no end to her wants."

Yes, that was true. Three months had not elapsed after that drowning catastrophe, before Dr. Goldstone was waited upon in his library by a blushing young gentleman and weeping young lady, whose united appeals he could not resist. He sprang clear out of his arm-chair in astonishment when the negotiation was first opened. Rosalind—his little Rosa—that mere child—in love! wanting to be engaged! thinking of marriage at some future day! The idea had never occurred to him. Great scholars and wise men are proverbial for walking through every-day life with leather spectacles on.

The tears which sparkled like dew amid the roses of her cheeks, soon convinced him of the reality of what was passing. The sincere tone, the manly look, and the intense solicitude of the youth, were in his favor. The Doctor

told them he would give them an answer the next day; and he spent the most of the next twenty-four hours in pondering the matter.

He knew the young man and his family. They were poor, intellectual and high principled; and Frederick did honor to his family. He was a student, of unimpeachable character, talents, and fair promise. If Rosalind must ever marry, her father could not have been better suited. His benevolence was rejoiced at the thought of conferring fortune upon one so well deserving of it. He already began to form plans of the pleasure he should have in imparting some of his own best stores of knowledge to the eager and gifted mind of his—son! Then Frederick was of that cordial, frank, and affectionate temperament which makes one the beloved inmate of a family. By the time that Rosalind was no longer a girl, whom he was to take every day upon his knee, he should be able, perhaps, to give his grandchildren that favored seat. If Rosa was so willful that she must needs grow up and be a woman, there was nothing for it, but that she must have some little girls to take her place.

The next day the young couple were made happy by his consent to their betrothal, trammelled by no conditions, except that they must wait a year for the wedding, and that they must always share his home with him.

We have seen in the beginning of this chapter how Rosalind was taking advantage of her present liberty and new information. The Doctor's mansion, long the wonder of the young people of the vicinity—a sort of magician's palace, from which they were provokingly shut out—was now open, in every nook and cranny, to their curiosity, with the exception of those study and work rooms of which he kept the keys.

Gay voices and light feet might be heard every day in hall and garden; and apartments which had never before been desecrated by such folly, now echoed to the gossip and long discussions upon this and that mode and fashion of wearing the hair and cutting the sleeves, so interesting to the fair sex. Dr. Goldstone himself was not unfrequently appealed to, to settle some dispute upon the length of prevailing waists and the width of prevailing ribbons, by some arch and laughing beauty, who would end her question by the flattering apology, that, as the Doctor knew *every-*

*thing*, he must be the best arbiter of the matter in discussion.

The house, too, was resplendent with mirrors, from first floor to attic. Once he caught Miss Rosalind before one of these, with the new Honiton lace dress on, viewing herself in this *pose* and then that, evidently lost in the deepest admiration of her own beautiful self.

Thus did this philosopher, in what should have been his discreetest days, allow the reins to be taken out of his hands, and the wool to be pulled over his leather spectacles. Yet he secretly avowed to his own conscience that he was growing a happier man, and that the sight and hearing of so much youth, merriment, folly and light-heartedness, was doing him good.

#### CHAPTER FIFTH.

**T**HE mansion of Dr. Goldstone was pouring forth floods of light from every window. It was Rosalind's wedding evening. It seemed as if the heavens, too, were illuminated, in honor of the occasion, for the full moon hung out her golden lamp to display the jewelry and rich array of the roses and lilies, now in the full flush of their June blossoming. Everything was resplendent, indoors and out. The invited guests were flitting about the porticoes, gardens, halls; all of that curiously-furnished and extensive house was thrown open to the wondering company. The garden of exotics, with its glass walls, nearly the eighth of a mile in length, the garden of the singing birds, the vast chamber with its organ, now peeling forth delicious music, were all brilliant with different fashions of illumination. The birds, surprised at the extended day, sang wedding madrigals, the flowers poured forth their incense lavishly, the organ arose in its might and breathed forth a bridal anthem, magnificent in its harmonies. The bride and bridegroom moved hither and thither through the admiring groups, their faces beaming with the happiness which was too real to be repressed. Rosalind was a miracle of loveliness. It was no wonder that her poet husband felt a passion and joy deeper than usually stirs the heart, even of a new-y-wedded man. There were other glances than his, that could hardly remove

themselves from her beautiful face, glowing with new emotions, the long lashes striving to conceal the humid brilliancy of the tell-tale eyes.

She was elegantly dressed. The mist that catches the moonbeam could hardly be more ethereal than the filmy lace that floated about her person, over an under robe of silvery satin, giving a still more delicate bloom and roundness to her arms and throat,

The fastening of her veil was not the usual wreath of orange blossoms, but a wreath of jewels worth half a kingdom, set in the most graceful manner, in imitation of the real flowers. She had found this wreath upon her toilette when she went to dress, with a note from her father, saying that it was his gift, and desiring her to wear it upon that particular evening.

"Papa does not know that it is not in good taste for a bride to wear such diamonds as these with her wedding dress," was the first thought of the young girl; but the next moment the remembrance of the affection which had prompted the splendid gift, drove out regret, and she placed them in her hair, regardless of other considerations.

The wreath was exquisitely designed, and when she saw it in contrast with her hair, the jewels flashing out covertly from clouds of delicate lace, she was delighted with the effect.

"No one dares to criticise it—it is too magnificent to be found fault with," she said to her attendants, and as this completed her array she turned away satisfied.

Neither she nor any other person suspected that the whole superb garland, from the tiniest covering of the gold setting to the crown diamond of the whole, was the work of her father's loving hands.

From the moment that she met the eyes of her lover, where he waited for her in the ante-chamber, and felt the touch of his trembling hand, Rosalind forgot all about the dress which had been the object of so much solicitude. She did not think of it again during the evening. Her heart and soul were with her lover—her husband; the emotion she felt was too overwhelming for those frail embankments of silks and lace, vanity and frippery, to withstand—they were swept into oblivion, and for that evening at least, she was unconscious of her own beauty, and its effect upon beholders.

So it seems that she was not quite spoiled by the flattery, dress, and gaiety

which had so suddenly beset her. Carried away with it she had been, but not out of her depth. Her pretty caprices, her willfulness, were all on the outside—her heart was right.

The grace, tastefulness, love of finery, which are part of the feminine nature (and should be, since the women use all these to make themselves agreeable to the coarser sex) having been kept back for want of sunshine, had burst forth rapidly, but were not destined to extravagant growth. The child who was reared according to a system of philosophy was almost a model child, after all—but the risk was great, and we would not advise others to run it. The seed happened to fall upon good soil, and repaid a hundred fold.

The festivities of the evening were drawing to a close. Rosalind was about withdrawing to the chamber which had been converted into a fairy bower of grace and luxury by liberal and affectionate hands, when her father approached her and drew her a little apart. He looked pale and troubled.

"You know the Mrs. Smith who lives down in the glen?"

"Very well, indeed, papa. She has been in declining health for a long time,—I have neglected her of late—I have been so taken up with my own affairs."

"She is dying, and has sent for you and me to attend her for a few moments only."

"We will go, dear father, by all means."

"But what do you think she can want of us, Rosalind?" Some doubt evidently disturbed him.

"I do not know, I am sure. But let us hasten. I love her very much, and I am so sorry I have neglected her. Perhaps she wishes to confide her boy to you. People hear much of your benevolence, papa, and she has a son who will be left without a friend in the world."

Dr. Goldstone drew a sigh of relief at the suggestion; and while Rosalind stole away to throw a mantle over her bridal finery, he whispered their errand to Frederick, and bade him say nothing of their absence, as they should speedily return.

Their carriage waited for them at the bottom of the avenue, and they were mistaken for departing guests, as they entered it and were driven away. A few moments brought them to the cottage, and the next one placed them within it. The Doctor entered first, glancing searchingly around. A woman lay upon the bed, wasted and wan, but still marvelously fair.

A glance told him that it was Eleanor. She was faint, and he did not dare to betray the emotion, of whatever nature it might be, that he felt. He poured out a glass of cordial which stood on the stand at the head of the bed, and gave it to her with as much apparent calmness as if she were an ordinary patient.

"I am dying, Ralph," she said, with a wan smile, when she had drank it.

The sound of that voice which had ever power to move his soul's sweetest depths, startled it out of the stony silence of years—that voice, now so full of pathos, regret and tenderness.

"Why have you sent for me, Eleanor?"

Rosalind was now standing by her father's side in mute surprise.

"Not for my own sake, but for my child's—my boy's."

He started as if stung by a scorpion, and gave an almost fierce glance across the couch at the silent boy who sat with his dark eyes fixed upon his mother's face.

"Do not look at him so, Ralph. It is to tell you the truth about him that I have sent for you at last. I could not die in peace, knowing I was wronging him. He is sensitive and pure—could I do him the injustice of leaving him branded with a mark which he has not deserved, and which does not belong to him? While I have strength to speak, let me say what is in my heart. Do not be afraid of your daughter's hearing what her mother has to say. Oh, Ralph! I am guiltless—guiltless as she of any sinful deed—but I sinned in thought and resolve, and for that I have borne, without complaining, a punishment which has gradually sapped out my life."

"You are weak, Eleanor. Drink this—for I would hear what you wish to say."

"I was a vain woman, Ralph—foolish and vain beyond what it was in your noble and generous mind to comprehend. Your kindness, the good-fortune you lavished upon me, turned my brain and hardened my heart. I was admired—others flattered me more than you, and because you were often silent and inattentive, formal and absorbed in other things, I was made to believe that your love was but little—less than I deserved. I was so selfish that I wished all—your time, your whole mind and soul—as if you had not already given me enough and too much."

"I will not seek to defend myself. I was persuaded to abandon you for one who professed to love me more passionately."

God knows how miserable I was, every moment after I made the promise, until the moment came for its consummation. The voice of conscience was never for a moment stilled. He told me I might take my little girl along, but I would not do this, although my heart was not so utterly perverted but that it cried out for her.

"I wrote the note and left it. At the midnight hour I stole forth where the carriage awaited us. He sprang forth. I had in my hand a casket containing my jewels. This he placed within, and turning, gave me his hand to assist me in. At that moment the veil which vanity had bound around my spiritual sight was rent away. The enormity of my sin rose up before me. With a low cry, I flung away his hand and darted within the gate. It swung together with a clash—and I was free. I hurried up the walk through the lower and upper hall; I came to the door of my room. There I stood still and prayed—prayed God to forgive me my offence, and vowed that if my fault was still undetected, never should another thought of evil enter my heart. In agony of soul I prayed that you might be still in your laboratory—that I might have time to destroy the note and calm my agitated nerves. I opened the door and looked within. You sat at the table; the note lay at your feet. The expression upon your face awed and terrified me; while never before did I so realize that I loved only you, and how worthy you were of all that a woman has to bestow. I yearned to go in and throw myself sobbing at your feet, which I felt unworthy to kiss. I did not dare to. I had sealed my own doom. If I had come *so near* to erring once, how could you ever be certain of my future truth and affection. I had made you wretched, and I could not undo the work. If your own character had not been so lofty, I might, in my anguish, have ventured. But I did not—and I never since have dared.

"For many moments I gazed upon you, and then I turned away, the most forlorn woman that was ever banished from happiness. All my pride and frivolity were gone forever. Only that which was best and most earnest in my nature remained. The wife of such a man should never degrade herself further. I went away into poverty and friendlessness. For three or four weeks I took board at an obscure lodging-house. Even in that retreat I heard of my own disgrace, and turned

pale at the jeers of the brutal crowd who jested with my name without knowing who it was that heard them.

"I have told you that my jewels were in the carriage. The prize was sufficient to tempt the honesty of the man with whom I was to have fled, and he embarked for Europe, and has been living since, I presume, upon their sale. I knew that I must do something; so I sold the costly brooch which I wore, and obtained means to set myself up in a provincial town as a music teacher. But not until I had first endured ill-health and suffering which it is strange did not kill me. The rings upon my fingers secured me board and attention until after my child was born. Look at him, Ralph; he is your son—named after you. When I had somewhat regained my health, I began, as I said, teaching music. I gave myself out as a widow; and the sadness of my demeanor corroborated the impression. I made a tolerable living. In all this time, I never lost sight of you. I knew of your voyage to South America, of your return and settlement here, and the course of life which you pursued. Finally, my heart pleaded so for an occasional stolen look—to be near you—to know of your daily life—that, four years after you came here, I followed you. I rented this little house, and have lived here ever since. Soon a great joy lightened my heavy heart. I saw and talked with my—with your—Rosalind. She came to see me—she talked about you—she and Ralph were friends. I watched her growth,—I, her mother, was permitted occasionally to smooth her hair, to kiss her cheek.

"You have suffered, Ralph—so have I; my sufferings have been embittered by the knowledge that they were deserved.

"I have had a motive in living, which has enabled me to prolong my feeble strength for years: the care and protection of my boy—my fatherless boy—whom I, myself, deprived of the care he should have had. I have worked for him—I have tried to instil high principles into his heart, and I have not failed. He is very like his father—a noble child. I ask you to take him when I am dead, and give him his rights. I could not die leaving him to shame and poverty, when a portion of the wealth and happiness of your house was his by right.

"It is my only request; I do not ask you to forgive me—to look upon me even

with pity. But Ralph—I love you—I have never loved any other—and with years and time, I but love you better and more, as you deserve. I shall take my affection for you pure and unspotted to the heaven of that Father who has long since forgiven my reported sorrows."

She paused, exhausted. Rosalind and her brother were weeping bitterly. The Doctor bowed over the dying woman and kissed her forehead. She looked up with a beaming smile. She was the beautiful Eleanor of old. He lifted her head to his bosom, and his tears dropped upon her hot and hectic cheek.

"Then you promise, Ralph! let me see you take your son by the hand, before I —."

And as the Doctor held out his hand eagerly to the boy, whose eyes were fixed upon his face, she fainted. For a moment all thought her dead. But again the skill of the physician was well-timed, and the tiny vial which he drew from his vest pocket, held an elixir which called back the hovering breath. A few low words which he whispered in her ear, had a still more mysterious effect. Hope and happiness have strange power to combat disease and death.

Frederick grew impatient and then uneasy before he saw his beautiful bride; but she returned to him at last.

Dr. Goldstone is now a man of family. He has forgotten many of his favorite theories. His large house is never too large for those who dwell within. His Eleanor is with him, as beloved as of old, and both are growing young as rapidly as most people are growing old. He is very fond and very proud of his boy Ralph. Rosalind and Frederick are as happy, as handsome, and as sensible a couple as can be found.

*Little Freddy* is a wonder—of course.

Rosalind's one fault is, that she is a little extravagant, and a trifle too fond of dress. The family, present and prospective, will probably keep the good Doctor busy at the manufacture of diamonds to meet their demands. He never intends to divulge the secret. He thinks too much wealth is dangerous, and believes that the California gold-mines have injured the United States.

We will not quarrel with him upon any of his favorite speculations. He is happy, and deserves to be; and we wish him well to the end of his days.

M. V. V.